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SIPDIS

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TAGS: PREL PHUM KISL KPAL WBG SA

SUBJECT: OIC SECRETARY GENERAL LETTER TO SECRETARY CLINTON  
URGING PRESSURE ON ISRAEL TO END SETTLEMENT EXPANSION AND  
HOME DEMOLITIONS; OIC SENDS AID CONVOY TO GAZA

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¶11. (SBU) SUMMARY: Post received a letter from OIC Secretary General Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu to Secretary Clinton voicing strong concerns over increased Israeli settlement activities as well as the demolition of Palestinian houses. Letter asks the United States to place pressure on Israel to cease the above activities. Meanwhile, the OIC has just announced a third major aid convoy to Gaza with clear support from the Saudi Arabian Government. END SUMMARY.

¶12. (SBU) Post received by fax the following letter from OIC Secretary General Ihsanoglu to Secretary Clinton dated May 6, 2009:

COVER MESSAGE BEGIN TEXT

The General Secretariat of the Organization of the Islamic Conference presents its compliments to the Consulate General of the United States of America in Jeddah and has the honour to enclose herewith letter No. OIC/PAL - 02/08/2009/002927 dated 06 May 2009, addressed to Her Excellency Hillary Rodham Clinton, Secretary of State of the United States of America, by Mr. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, Secretary General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, for onward transmission to its high addressee.

The General Secretariat of the Organization of the Islamic Conference avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Consulate General of the United States of America the assurances of its highest consideration.

Encl: As stated above

COVER MESSAGE END TEXT

¶13. (SBU) BEGIN TEXT OF LETTER

Excellency,

Please allow me at the outset to express my confidence that your dedication and determination to make the change envisaged by the new US Administration will help you achieve brilliant success in your mission. The peoples of the Middle East and the Muslim World at large pin genuine hopes on the new Administration and believe that your direct and constructive engagement in the peace process would bring

about positive results towards reaching everlasting and comprehensive settlement of the thorny Arab-Israeli conflict.

Nevertheless, the hopes of the nations in the regions are challenged by serious concerns over the ongoing developments in East Jerusalem especially the Israeli settlement activities which have manifestly escalated during the past few months. Of special concern for the Organization of the Islamic Conference and its 57 member states have been the massive settlement construction and expansion in addition to the large-scale home demolition of Palestinian-owned buildings which seek to de-populate East Jerusalem of its indigenous Palestinian inhabitants while at the same time bring more Israeli settlers to the occupied City.

The Israeli act of demolishing Palestinian homes in occupied East Jerusalem is a systematic violation of the relevant provisions of international law, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention, and relevant United Nations resolutions. In addition to its illegal nature, Israel's plan has harmful consequences for peace and security in the region. I do believe that these acts violate the principles of the Middle East Peace Process, unilaterally prejudice the future of East Jerusalem and jeopardize the prospects of the two-state solution, not to mention putting at stake international efforts to establish peace in the Middle East.

There is no doubt that when President Obama and yourself are exerting strenuous efforts to emphasize justice and lawfulness as components of the new US foreign policy, and when you are laying the ground for a new partnership and engagement with the Islamic World, continuation of these illegal settlement activities in the Occupied East Jerusalem in violation of international law and peace commitments will not help achieve our ultimate and common goal of peace and

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security. Therefore, I would like to call upon you to use your good offices to bring pressure to bear on the Israeli government to stop its settlement activities, halt its plan to demolish Palestinian homes and to refrain from carrying out such illegal acts. I avail myself of this opportunity to renew to Your Excellency my highest consideration.

Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu

In handwriting: with my cordial sentiments and best regards

END TEXT OF LETTER

¶3. (SBU) OIC SENDS AID CONVOY TO GAZA WITH SAG SUPPORT: The OIC has launched an aid convoy to Gaza consisting of medicine, equipment, food, clothing and other items. On May 6 a ceremony was held in Jeddah to mark the launch of a humanitarian convoy and was presided over by Governor of Jeddah, H.R.H. Prince Mish'al bin Majed bin Abdul Aziz on behalf of H.R.H. Prince Khalid Al-Faisal, Governor of the Mecca Region. Chairman of the JCCI, Sheikh Mohammed Abdulqader Alfadel, was among several hundred attending the event. According to the OIC website, this is the third humanitarian convoy dispatched to Gaza by the OIC since hostilities began late last year. This latest shipment consists of over 43 truckloads. OIC website notes a plan to hold a forthcoming conference in Riyadh with the objective of raising more than 100 million dollars.

¶4. (SBU) COMMENT: OIC officials hope to send a high level delegation to visit the U.S. this summer. It is likely that the issues raised in the letter will be on their agenda. Post will continue to monitor OIC response to regional events. END COMMENT.

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